

ABSTRACT

A high pulse energy, side pumped laser is provided. The laser has an optical cavity formed between a first and a second reflective surface. A lasing medium is located within the cavity along its optical axis. A plurality of diode bars are provided in optical communication with the lasing medium preferably a lasing rod. The diode bars supply electromagnetic radiation to the lasing rod. The diode bars are configured about the lasing rod so that electromagnetic radiation from the diodes bars propagates through the lasing rod on a plurality of substantially nonintersecting paths. Since the lasing rod is side pumped, the substantially nonintersecting paths traverse the lasing rod substantially perpendicular to the direction of propagation of energy in the laser cavity.